MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES

• TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM •

Program Policies and Procedures

VISION, MISSION, AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Vision

ALL Marylanders are valued and respected and have the knowledge, opportunity, and power to make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

Mission

MDOD advances the rights and interests of people with disabilities so they may fully participate in their communities.

Program Overview

The Maryland Department of Disabilities Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) provides assistive technology services available to every Maryland resident with a disability, providing tools to help Marylanders with disabilities and seniors enjoy the same rights and opportunities as other citizens. Our program is available to individuals, families, advocates and professionals.

Our free services include equipment demonstrations, equipment loans, a device-exchange program, training, and public awareness initiatives. We manage two low-interest financing programs for the purchase of assistive technology and provide access to cooperative buying discounts on AT purchases. MDTAP is a program of the Maryland Department of Disabilities and coordinates with two regional offices to deliver these free AT services to Marylanders across the state.

DEVICE DEMONSTRATIONS

Background and Purpose:
The AT Act requires state programs to directly, or in collaboration with public and private entities, demonstrate a variety of assistive technology (AT) devices and assistive technology services (including assisting individuals in making informed choices regarding, and providing experiences with, the devices and services), using personnel who are familiar with such devices and services and their applications.

A device demonstration is characterized by its interactive nature whereby the participant(s) can interact with an expert to increase their knowledge and understanding about the details and functions of a device; the participant(s) drive(s) the demonstration and has/have the ability to interact and have their individual questions about the device addressed through the most effective means to provide the demonstration.

These policies and procedures describe how an individual will experience a guided demonstration on appropriate assistive technology devices as provided by Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) staff with technical expertise.

Definitions:

A device demonstration:
- enables an individual to make an informed choice
- provides individualized, guided experience with the device(s)
- is interactive and conducted in real-time
- compares the features and benefits of a particular AT device or category of devices
- is led by someone who has technical expertise
- should be hands-on (most of the time)

A device demonstration is not:
- training that includes showing devices
- public awareness that includes showing devices
- archived presentations about devices (whether available on the Internet, DVD, etc)

Policies:
1) MDTAP and its regional contractors will provide device demonstrations that occur across the State.
2) MDTAP staff will conduct device demonstrations that will be based on timely access to appropriate technology.
3) MDTAP device demonstrations will provide individuals comprehensive and valued experiences with a range of devices (as measured through individual Performance Measures and Satisfaction Surveys). The presentation experience will include review of the relative features and benefits of the devices demonstrated, as presented in a systematic fashion.
4) MDTAP staff conducting the device demonstrations will have the knowledge and skills to understand a diverse group of individuals, and will be knowledgeable of a wide array of AT devices.
5) Referrals may be made to outside AT professionals for evaluations, technical support, and/or funding assistance to further enhance the device demonstration program.
6) Data collection and reporting, financial status reporting, and program review participation relative to device demonstration activity will be carried out in compliance with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) requirements.

Procedures:

1. Device demonstrations will be made (without charge) to Maryland residents with disabilities and/or family members, where appropriate. Device demonstrations can also be made to professional staff that support individuals with disabilities
2. The MDTAP demonstration centers will be available by appointment.
3. All individuals will have access to low and high technology items (appropriate to their needs) from the categories of: augmentative communication, telecommunication, computer access, environmental control, memory aids, educational accommodations, vision aids, hearing products, and devices for daily living.
4. MDTAP will maintain an inventory of devices available for demonstration that is up-to-date and reflective of the most current innovations available (as constantly monitored by staff and as funding is available to maintain current equipment).
5. Devices available to be shown during demonstrations will be in proper working order. Staff will routinely assess the equipment inventory for out-dated and/or non-working devices.
6. Devices available for demonstration will be shared with the equipment loan library and reflected in that inventory. Posting of that inventory will be made available to those seeking device demonstrations.
7. MDTAP staff will implement a logical, systematic decision-making process during equipment demonstrations in order to match the capabilities and needs of an individual to the characteristics of an assistive technology device or service. Steps of this process include:
    1. **Identifying tasks to be accomplished**: Staff will identify the task(s) an individual wants or needs to do that is impacted by a disability. Activities the person wants to be involved in throughout their environments, at home, at work, at school, and in the community will be considered.
    2. **Gathering background information**: Staff will gain an understanding of the individual regarding their functional abilities, personal characteristics, assistive technology experiences, and environments.
    3. **Matching equipment features to individual's needs:** Staff will have the expertise in the area of assistive technology to explain the variety of options and will match the individual with the appropriate equipment features.
    4. **Considering potential equipment**: Once equipment features have been identified, potential devices will be demonstrated and the individual will be able to explore this equipment.
    5. **Defining follow-up activities**: Staff will determine activities with which an individual may need assistance; such as: arranging a trial use of the equipment, purchasing information, training, funding avenues, or further device exploration.

4.1) MDTAP staff conducting device demonstrations will have the necessary knowledge to identify the needs and goals of a diverse group of individuals varying in age and disability.
4.2) MDTAP staff conducting device demonstrations will have the necessary knowledge and skills regarding various device features and benefits across the full range of AT device categories.
4.3) MDTAP staff will receive regular training from internal and external sources to be current on the various device features and benefits across the full range of AT device categories.

5.1) MDTAP will maintain a listing of AT professionals who may provide evaluations and make specific recommendations regarding assistive technology devices and services.
5.2) MDTAP will maintain current and comprehensive funding sources to assist individuals in exploring funding options to acquire an assistive technology device.
5.3) Any referral made for a consumer to a service provider, vendor, repair service, or funding source will be done so with the specific consent of the consumer.
6.1) MDTAP will follow the RSA guidelines on the data collection system as it pertains to device demonstration activities. Staff will document these

related activities in an electronic data collection database that will be compiled for necessary reporting. Staff will also be responsible for collecting customer satisfaction survey information for those served by device demonstrations. This survey information will also be documented and compiled for data reporting and to guide program improvements.

Reference Citations:
- Assistive Technology Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-364).
- Rehabilitation Services Administration presentation: <u>Defining and Understanding Device Demonstration and Loan Programs</u>, NATTAP Specialized Training; Raleigh, NC; February 12 – 14, 2007.
- Rehabilitation Services Administration (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education) Manual for Program Review of the State Grant for AT Program under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended; Version 1.1; October 1, 2008.
- <u>Assistive Technology Assessment Process</u>; North Dakota Interagency Program for Assistive Technology; Winter, 1999.
- <u>ND IPAT Device Demonstration Policies and Procedures</u>, December 2008

SHORT-TERM EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM

The purpose of the Assistive Technology Equipment Loan Program is to offer a variety of assistive technology equipment for a short-term loan to Marylanders with disabilities, so that a trial period can be experienced before a purchase is considered.

The short-term equipment loan program provides Marylanders with disabilities the opportunity to borrow devices to:

Assist in decision-making "try before you buy"

Serve as a replacement while waiting for device funding or repair

To provide a short-term accommodation

For professional development activities

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CATEGORIES IN THE LOAN LIBRARY

- Hearing
- Vision
- Education
- Communication
- Computer Access
- Cognitive Learning
- Aids for Daily Living
- Memory Aids
- Environmental Adaptations

Equipment Inventory

The MDTAP AT Lending Library/Equipment Loan Program inventory consists of assistive technology that can assist consumers in identifying items that can enhance independence.

The AT Lending Library inventory is limited to assistive technology devices which are intended for personal use by an individual, for demonstration or for training; are feasible to ship; do not require mechanical installation; do not entail mobility or weight bearing; and do not require permanent modifications to the device itself in order to be used. In addition, devices that require services (e.g. pagers; Internet) are only included to the extent that services are available at no cost on a trial basis.

If an item is not in the inventory, the MDTAP contact person will work with the recipient to identify substitute items and/or alternative resources for obtaining the item.

Request Process

Who May Request Loans
1. Requests for equipment loans may be made by the recipient, the recipient's family member, friend, or advocate, or the individual who will serve as the support person during the loan period.

2. Requests may also be made by service providers, agencies, education institutions, and organizations who wish to borrow items on behalf of an individual or who plan to use the device(s) for demonstration or training.

Completing the Equipment Loan Agreement
1. In order to borrow equipment from the AT Lending Library, an Equipment Loan Agreement must be completed.

How Many Devices Can An Individual Borrow?
1. Individuals may borrow one device at a time.
2. For recipients in good standing, there is no limit to the number of times loans may be requested.
3. A recipient is considered in good standing if he/she has returned all previous items in a timely manner, in good condition, and follows all other recipient responsibilities.

Delivery and Pick Up

Please note the following procedures regarding shipment.

1. Items must be delivered and picked up at the same address, unless other arrangements are made prior to initial shipping.
2. If no one is usually at home during regular business hours, do not use a home address on the request form. Request that the device be delivered to an alternate address, e.g. A family member's office.
3. If the loan package is to be delivered to a large facility such as a hospital, the name of the person who is to receive the loan package plus specific department information and room numbers are required for delivery.

Loan Period

The standard loan period is approximately 4 weeks after the equipment arrives at the shipping address.

Recipients may request an extension to the loan period. Extensions can be modified based on individual circumstances and need, as well as demand for and availability of the device.

Recipient's Responsibilities and Liability

1. The recipient is responsible for proper handling and use of the device.
2. The recipient is responsible for returning all components to the AT Lending Library. The device should be packed up and ready for UPS pick up on the due date indicated in the loan package.
3. If a recipient does not return all components of a device and/or notify AT Lending Library staff about problems with returning it, he or she is financially responsible for the replacement value of the device or any missing components. The replacement value of each device will be indicated in the Equipment Loan Agreement.
4. In the case of loss of a device, the recipient will be held financially liable. Contact the Maryland Technology Assistance Program immediately to report a loss (800-832-4827 V or 866-881-7488 TTY).
5. The recipient is not held responsible for equipment breakage or malfunction that occurs during normal use. However, the recipient may be held liable if she/he does not notify the MDTAP AT Lending Library staff immediately if an equipment breakage or malfunction occurs.
6. Failure to comply with these responsibilities will result in the recipient's loss of future access to the AT Lending Library.

Waiting List

In the event there is a waiting list for a requested item, the MDTAP AT Specialist will work with the recipient to identify alternative sources to try, borrow or rent the device. The MDTAP AT Specialist will also identify comparable or similar devices in that AT Lending Library inventory that may be substituted for the requested item. The AT Specialist will then discuss these alternatives with the recipient.

Damaged, Missing, and Overdue Items
1. In the case of damage or loss of a device, the recipient will be held financially liable for repair or replacement of the device or component, whichever is less. Contact the Maryland Technology Assistance Program immediately to report loss or damage (800-832-4827 V or 866-881-7488 TTY).

Overdue Items
2. If an item is not returned to MDTAP by the date noted on the Equipment Loan Agreement, MDTAP staff will contact the equipment recipient to arrange the return of the equipment.
3. **Staff will work with recipients to provide equipment extensions if applicable.**

(See Equipment Loan Agreement attachment)

Date Borrowed:	Date Due for Return:	MTS ☐ CL☐

Equipment Loan Agreement

MDTAP
Maryland Technology Assistance Program
2301 Argonne Dr. Room T-17
Baltimore, MD 21218 410-554-9232

Borrower's Name: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Telephone: Work:_____ Home:_____ Cell: _____

County:_____ Email: _____

Person for whom the device is being borrowed:_____

Type of Equip.	Description	Serial #	TAP ID #	Executive Tag #

(Use reverse side for additional equipment)

I, the borrower agree to use this equipment in a responsible manner, and to protect it from damage or loss. If the equipment should break down or become damaged or lost, I will notify MDTAP immediately. I agree to reimburse for reasonable maintenance and repairs at my own expense.

I agree to hold harmless MDTAP and waive any liability that may arise as a result of my possession or use of the borrowed equipment.

I further agree not to lend, sell or otherwise dispose of the equipment, or permit its use by others, without the express approval of MDTAP.

I will provide batteries if necessary while I have this equipment. I will charge the batteries as directed.

I will notify MDTAP of any change of address or phone number during the time I have this equipment.

I will return the equipment on time or call before the due date to make other arrangements.

BORROWER:_____ DATE:_____

MDTAP Staff:_____

Please fill out this page and return with the equipment – thank you!

1. **Type of Device**
   ___ Vision
   ___ Hearing
   ___ Speech/Communication
   ___ Learning, cognition, and developmental
   ___ Mobility, seating and positioning
   ___ Daily living
   ___ Environmental adaptations
   ___ Vehicle modification and transportation
   ___ Computers and related
   ___ Recreation, sports, and leisure
   ___ Other (specify) _____

2. **Type of Participant**
   ___ Individual with disability
   ___ Family member, guardian or authorized representative
   ___ Representative of education
   ___ Representative of employment
   ___ Representative of health, allied health and rehabilitation
   ___ Representative of community living
   ___ Representative of technology
   ___ Other

3. **Referrals to Other Entities**
   ___ Funding source (other than MD TAP)
   ___ Service provider
   ___ Vendor
   ___ Repair service
   ___ Other

4. **Primary Purpose for Which AT is Needed**
   ___ Education
   ___ Employment
   ___ Community Living
   ___ IT/Telecommunications

5. **Decision About AT Device**
   ___ Decided that AT device will meet needs
   ___ Decided that AT device will not meet needs
   ___ Have not made a decision
   ___ Nonrespondent

6. **Customer Satisfaction with AT Loan Service**
   ___ Highly satisfied
   ___ Satisfied
   ___ Satisfied somewhat
   ___ Not satisfied
   ___ Nonrespondent

Equipment Exchange

Device exchange activities are those in which devices are listed in a "want ad"-type posting and consumers can contact and arrange to obtain the device (either by purchasing it or obtaining it for free) from the current owner. Exchange activities do not involve warehousing inventory and do not include repair, sanitation, or refurbishing of used devices.

1. MDTAP maintains and facilitates an equipment exchange website – www.equipmentlink.org to support the exchange of assistive technology devices within Maryland and amongst regional state partners.
2. Individuals may submit listings electronically at www.equipmentlink.org or via telephone by contacting MDTAP at 1-800-832-4827. Individuals wishing to purchase or receive items can search for these items on the website. MDTAP staff are also available to perform searches on behalf of individuals; search requests may be made by calling 1-800-832-4827.
3. MDTAP staff may contact individuals listing or searching for items to help facilitate exchanges.
4. MDTAP is not liable or responsible for the quality and condition of items sold, loaned, donated, or received via www.equipmentlink.org.
5. Data collection and reporting guidelines, as required by the Department of Education, shall be followed with regard to equipment exchange and the equipmentlink.org website.

Training

Training activities are instructional events, usually planned in advance for a specific purpose or audience, which are designed to increase participants' knowledge, skills, and competencies regarding AT. Such events can be delivered to large or small groups, in-person, or via telecommunications or other distance education mechanisms.

In general, participants in training can be individually identified and could complete an evaluation of the training. Examples of training include classes, workshops, and presentations that have a goal of increasing skills, knowledge, and competency, as opposed to training intended only to increase general awareness of AT. Training activities are focused on skill building and competency development and are designed to teach, present, or guide individuals or impart knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Requests

1. Training requests can be made directly to MDTAP staff.
2. Trainings are offered Free of Charge.

Information & Assistance

The Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MDTAP) will respond within 48 hours from the receipt of a request for information and assistance. MDTAP will also make referrals to other agencies, organizations, and companies that can provide them with needed information on AT products, services, devices, and funding sources, if appropriate. Information may be provided in person, over the phone, via email, or by other means.

Public Awareness & Outreach

MDTAP will conduct activities to reach large numbers of people including but not limited to newsletters, website postings, Public Service Announcements, presentations, expos and conferences.

MDTAP will maintain modes of communication with the public that provide current information on the program, services, and developments.

MDTAP will also use modes of new media and social networking such as Facebook, Twitter, and the AT Blog to provide up-to-date information on AT advances, AT-related news, and local and national events specific to AT.

Assistive Technology Loan Program & WorkABILITY Loan Program

The Assistive Technology Loan Program (ATLP) and the WorkABILITY Loan Program maintain a complete set of Program Policies and Procedures maintained and updated by ATLP Staff and the Loan Program Board of Directors. To request a copy of these Policies and Procedures, please contact loans@mdtap.org or call 1-800-832-4827.

Disclaimer: MDTAP's regional partners, Holly Community Inc. and AT:LAST, maintain their own, individual program Policies and Procedures. The regional partner's Policies and Procedures may differ from MDTAP's.